

THE COMPANIONS ARE THE STARS OF GUIDANCE

A defense of the hadith:
My Companions are like the Stars of Guidance ﷺ

by

*Sheikh Muḥammad
Akhtar Riḍā Khān al-Qādirī*



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*Publisher's Introduction**

All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May prayers and salutations be upon the master of the two worlds, our liege lord Muḥammad, and upon his family, Companions, and all who follow his exemplary way.

ALLAH CHOSE THE COMPANIONS OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ to keep intimate company with him and learn from his statements, actions, and exalted spiritual states. This divinely preordained bounty set them apart from the rest of humanity—after the Prophets—and made them the standard bearers of the Prophetic way.

This treatise written by the scholar and sage, Sheikh Muḥammad Akhtar Riḍā Khān, discusses the famous hadith ascribed to the Prophet ﷺ: “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.” This hadith was declared weak by many scholars; however, the author explains that if a weak hadith gains fame and general acceptance it can be judged as authentic. Imam al-Suyūṭī said in *Tadrīb al-rāwī*: “Some of them have said that a hadith is judged authentic if it is met with general acceptance among the people, even if it does not possess an authentic chain.”

The tribulation of our time is that there are those who, in their misplaced zeal, claim that this hadith is forged. That is a baseless view first propagated by the literalist scholar Ibn

Ḥazm, and followed by the late Sheikh Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, the self-taught Salafi “revivalist.”

Sheikh Muḥammad Akhtar Riḍā Khān does not seek to authenticate this hadith; his goal is to respond to the claims that it is forged [*mawḍūʿ*] and prove that [1] it has a basis [2] that there are similar reports that are sound [3] the Gnostics and saints accepted the soundness of this hadith through their spiritual unveiling [*kashf*]. This treatise is also a brilliant defense of the Companions’ preeminence in jurisprudence and reflects the author’s mastery of the hadith sciences and legal theory. May Allah send prayers and salutations upon our master Muḥammad, and upon his family and Companions entire.

- Dr. Najāḥ ʿAwad Ṣiyām
Muqattam Publishers,
Cairo, Egypt

**Paraphrased and condensed from the original Arabic text. The work was first published by Muqattam Publishers in Cairo, Egypt.*

Author's words

*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful.
Choicest and countless blessings be upon our beloved
Prophet, his holy offspring and Companions.*

It is indeed a pleasure to know that Muḥammad Junayd al-Riḍāwī has arranged for the translation of my book *al-Ṣaḥāba nujūm al-ih̄tidā'*. I pray to Almighty Allah to accept his effort and to give him success in his future endeavors.



- Muḥammad Akhtar Riḍā Khān al-Qādirī
29th Sha^ʿbān al-Mua^ʿẓẓam 1431,
Medina al-Ṭayyiba

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

All praise belongs to Allah who elevates and abases, gives and withholds, and does as He wills. May prayers and peace be upon our master Muḥammad—the one for whom the banner is raised, and the one by whom afflictions are staved off—and upon his family who are the ships of salvation, his Companions who are the luminous stars of guidance and those who follow them with excellence until the Day of Requital.

IHAPPENED TO COME ACROSS A PURILE EDITOR DISCUSSING the hadith cited in [Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’s] *al-Shifā*¹, which reads: “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.”² He claimed in his footnote within the aforementioned book that the hadith is forged [*mawḍūʿ*]. But he is unqualified to make this claim, and in the following pages I shall quote his words and thoroughly critique them, spoiling his plans. I seek Allah’s assistance, and He is sufficient for me and the Best Aid. In the editor’s footnote to this hadith in *al-Shifā* he stated:

It is forged. Al-Dhahabī mentioned it in *al-Mīzān* (2:131) within the biographical entry of Jaʿfar b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-

Hāshimī, and he cited al-Dāraquṭnī’s statement regarding him: “He forges hadith.” And Abū Zur‘a said, “He narrated hadith reports that have no basis,” and he mentioned this hadith among his misfortunes. See Ibn Ḥajar’s *al-Talkhīṣ al-ḥabīr* (p. 2098) and Ibn Ḥazm’s *al-Iḥkām* (5:61).

His claim that the hadith is forged is repudiated, and his use of al-Dāraquṭnī’s statement, “He fabricates hadith,” is rejected. First of all, Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī cited al-Dāraquṭnī and said after narrating this hadith:

This was narrated by al-Dāraquṭnī in *Faḍā’il [al-Ṣaḥāba]*, and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr mentioned it with his chain from the hadith of Jābir, and he said, “This chain does not establish any evidence.” It was also reported by ‘Abd b. Ḥumayd in his *Musnad* from Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ.


Al-Bazzār said, “It is reprehensible and unauthentic.” Ibn ‘Adī also narrated it in his *al-Kāmil* with his chain of transmission from Nāfi‘, who reported from Ibn ‘Umar with the wording: “So whichever statement of them you take. . .” instead of “you follow,” and its chain of transmission is weak.

Al-Bayhaqī narrated a similar report in *al-Madkhal* from the hadith of ‘Umar and the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās, and from another angle in expedient form [*mursal*], and mentioned that its text is well-known [*mashhūr*] and its chains are weak.³

Al-Ḥalabī said, “It would have been better had al-Qāḍī [‘Iyāḍ] not mentioned it as if it were definitely a hadith, due to what is known about it among the scholars of this science—and he has done this many times before.” I [Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī] say: It is possible that he established a chain

for it, or that he considered the multiplicity of its chains to elevate its grade from weak to good [*ḥasan*], due to his good opinion about it, not to mention the fact that even weak hadith can be acted upon in the realm of meritorious acts [*faḍā'il al-a'māl*]¹—and Allah knows best.

Several things become clear from the words of al-Qārī that we have reproduced here. Firstly, al-Dāraquṭnī narrated this hadith himself and did not rule that it is forged. Had he done so, al-Qārī would have quoted him regarding that. Secondly, al-Qārī's mention of Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr who narrated it with his chain of transmission from the hadith of Jābir clearly indicates that it is weak and not forged. Likewise, al-Bazzār's statement that it is reprehensible and unauthentic indicates that the hadith in question is weak and not forged. Moreover, his statement that it was narrated by Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* with his chain of transmission from Ibn ʿUmar with the wording “So whichever statement of them you take,” and that its chain is weak, supports the position that the hadith does not transfer from the rank of “weak” to that of “forged.”

Let the editor contemplate al-Qārī's mention of al-Bayhaqī and the fact that he narrated a similar report in his *al-Madkhal* from the hadith of ʿUmar and the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, and from another angle in expedient form [*mursal*], and then stated that its text is well-known [*mashhūr*] and its chains of transmission are weak. If you look intently at the statement of al-Bayhaqī you will realize that it provides an additional benefit, namely that the text is well-known [*mashhūr*], even if its chains are weak. This is a clear indication from him  that the hadith is acceptable, which further entails that the narrators are conferred a certain level

of reliability. It increases in strength with its multiple chains of transmission, which is why al-Qārī's closing statement alludes to the fact that it is elevated to the level of good [*ḥasan*] for this reason.

In addition, when the erudite scholar, al-Shihāb al-Khafājī, spoke about al-Dāraquṭnī, he merely mentioned that he narrated it; he did not mention that al-Dāraquṭnī judged the hadith to be forged. Therefore, al-Dāraquṭnī's statement that he [Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī] “forges hadith” is insufficient evidence to prove that the hadith is forged. Al-Khafājī said, “This was narrated by al-Dāraquṭnī, and by Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr in [*Jāmiʿ bayān*] *al-ʿIlm* from multiple routes, all of which are weak—to the extent that Ibn Ḥazm said that it is forged.”

Secondly, Abū Zurʿa's statement that “he [Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī] narrated hadith reports that have no basis” does not satisfy the requirement of proof because it is not an explicit ruling that the hadith in question is forged; rather, this might be said regarding a hadith whose chain is unknown.

The clearest proof that Abū Zurʿa's statement is not a ruling that the hadith is forged is another statement from him that was cited by Ibn Ḥajar in *Lisān al-mīzān* under the biographical entry of Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī. Ibn Ḥajar said:

Saʿīd b. ʿAmr al-Bardaʿī said, “I rehearsed before Abū Zurʿa the hadith reports that he heard from Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid but he rejected them, saying, ‘They are without basis,’ and he said regarding some that ‘they are false and forged.’ Afterwards he returned and said, ‘Before, when I would see

him, I would desire to speak with him due to the tranquility he possessed.”

Therefore, when Abū Zur‘a said that these hadith were without basis, it did not mean that they were forged; the divertive indication [*qarīna*] here being al-Barda‘ī’s statement that *some* were “false and forged.” The explicit indication of this shows that there is a distinction between what he ruled to be without basis and what he clearly declared false and forged—and the ruling on the latter refers to *the chain* and not the text of the hadith, as is not hidden.

Moreover, Abū Zur‘a’s statement that “they are without basis” is only as far as his knowledge was concerned, and this is indicated in the aforementioned quote where he rejected them. The same may be said with concerning Ibn ‘Adī’s statement that Ja‘far b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Hāshimī “steals hadith⁴ and narrates disclaimed [*munkar*] reports from reliable narrators.”

Thirdly, the statements in his biographical entry mentioning that he narrated hadith reports that were without basis, transmitted disclaimed reports [*manākīr*] from reliable narrators, and was accused of forging chains of narration and stealing hadith (which was mentioned by Ibn Abī Hātim) are all clear indications that *the chain* is forged; for it can be said that a hadith is forged vis-à-vis its chain, which only applies to the chain alone and not the text of the hadith itself.

As for the report that says that [the Caliph] al-Musta‘in sought to exile him due to something he heard about him, that is obviously a non-descript discreditation [*jarḥ ghayr mufassar*] which cannot be considered a discreditation in reality. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ said:

Discreditation [*jarḥ*] is not accepted unless it is detailed and its reason is made clear; for people disagree about that which discredits and that which does not: one will discredit [someone else] on account of something that he believes warrants discrediting, but it is not so in reality. Therefore, the reason for discreditation must be explained so it can be looked into and decided if it merits discreditation or not—and this is apparent and established in jurisprudence and its fundamentals.⁵

Fourthly, Abū Zur‘a’s statement that some of his [Ja‘far b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid] hadith are false and forged carries several potential meanings: it is possible that it revolves around the person of Ja‘far b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid alone, which means that he is the only one accused; the most this indicates is that he is alleged to have forged, which doesn’t in and of itself entail that everything he reported is likewise forged. Consequently, it is incorrect to maintain a definite position on this hadith or to think that it is forged.

Fifthly, how can it be asserted that this hadith is forged—as Ustādh Ṭāhā ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf [the editor] did—when, in *Mirqāt al-mafātīḥ*, Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī quoted Ibn Ḥajar who said that it “is weak and flimsy,” and did not agree with Ibn Ḥazm’s assessment that it is forged and false? Al-Qārī said:

However, it is mentioned that al-Bayhaqī said, “The hadith found in Muslim conveys some of its meaning,” namely the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: “The stars are a source of security for the heavens. . .”⁶ Ibn Ḥajar said, “Al-Bayhaqī spoke the truth, for this confirms the correctness of the

semblance between the Companions and the stars. It is not clear, however, that it indicates following [*iqtidā*], but that could be inferred from the meaning inherent in *being guided* by the stars.” I [al-Qārī] say: What is apparent is that *being guided* is a branch of following.

Notice how he corrected and rejected Ibn Ḥazm’s claims that it is forged, and supported the meaning of the hadith by approvingly quoting from al-Bayhaqī. This is the response to the usage of Ibn Ḥajar’s words: he did not say that the hadith is forged and false, and he did not approve Ibn Ḥazm’s claim; rather, he approved of al-Bayhaqī’s statement and supported the hadith, even though he said about it in the beginning that it is “weak and flimsy,” as is clear. ⁷

Sixthly, let us revisit and ponder over what was mentioned in Ja‘far’s biographical entry: It is related from al-Dāraquṭnī that Ja‘far would forge hadith, and it is also mentioned that al-Dāraquṭnī narrated this same hadith that he considered forged on account of Ja‘far; so it is clear that his statement was contradicted by his action, for if al-Dāraquṭnī’s narration from Ja‘far isn’t considered a tacit declaration of Ja‘far’s reliability, then the least that can be said is that it gives the impression that Ja‘far’s hadith reports can be recorded and accepted—and had it been otherwise al-Dāraquṭnī would have brought attention to it. Similarly, Ibn ‘Adī’s comment that he would steal hadith and transmit disclaimed reports from reliable narrators doesn’t imply that the hadith is forged: as we mentioned earlier, it only indicates that the chain in question is forged. And the apparent meaning of Abū Zur‘a’s statement that the hadith is “from his misfortunes” is not accepted, for this hadith is supported by another narration

that does not revolve around Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid. It has also been reported from various chains on the authority of ʿUmar, as well as from Jābir, Ibn ʿUmar, and Ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنه.

Nonetheless, Abū Zurʿa’s statement that the hadith is “from his misfortunes” is only with respect to the wording of the hadith as it was quoted in *al-Mīzān*, which reads: “My Companions are like the stars; whoever follows anything from them will be guided.” As you can see, this is not the same hadith that was quoted in *al-Shifā* and *Mishkāṭ* and other works: “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.” So even if it is assumed, for argument’s sake, that it is forged, that only applies to the text mentioned in *al-Mīzān* and is not transferred to other wordings, as is clear.

As for what al-Dhahabī mentioned, as well as Ibn Ḥajar in both his *al-Mīzān* and *Lisān al-mīzān*, that Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid swore an oath that he would not narrate hadith or say “so-and-so narrated to us [*ḥaddathanā*],” the most these things indicate is that he was not granted permission [*maʿdhūn*] to narrate hadith, and that only negates his license to transmit hadith, and does not establish that forgery occurred in either the chain or the text. So as you can see, this is consistent with what was mentioned earlier regarding the claim that he used to steal hadith, which gives the impression that the chain was forged—this particular comment indicates that the hadith has a chain and a basis, but that Jaʿfar was not granted license to narrate hadith.

Ibn ʿAdī reproduced several hadith reports belonging to Jaʿfar’s and said that “they are all false, and some of them have been stolen from the folk [narrators].” This does not harm us, for Ibn ʿAdī has himself narrated this hadith with his route of transmission and ruled that its chain is weak.

As you see, he did not rule that the text of the hadith was a forgery. Furthermore, Ibn ʿAdī failed to mention the reason why Jaʿfar was forbidden from narrating hadith, so this is similar to an ambiguous discreditation [*jarḥ mubḥam*]. And Ibn ʿAdī’s comments that Jaʿfar’s hadith reports “are all false” is unclear, for he failed to explain how they were false: was it from the chain or was it from the text? If the falsehood of his reports were in the texts themselves, then how is he judged as a forger and what are the signs of his weakness? Is the ruling that the hadith is forged speculative and based on his own certainty, and if so, what category of forgeries does it fall under? It is inappropriate to rely on generalities when details are called for; proof must be furnished to support the claim that it is forged, and there must be direct and specific evidence to establish that it is a forgery, and the area whence the forgery comes must also be explained. This is an area that calls for detail, where generalities do not suffice, and this is well-known to those who have acquired knowledge in this field.

With regards to al-Qaʿnabī’s comments, he was only bringing attention to the fact that this occurred once with Jaʿfar, and that it was not a continuing reoccurrence; therefore, it is not a full-fledged discreditation, and would only be considered as such if it was demonstrated that Jaʿfar did it intentionally. Ibn Amīr al-Ḥājj said in *al-Taqrīr wa al-taḥbīr*:

(*Except that the first*) meaning [the hadith], “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided” (*is unknown*) based on the statement of Ibn Ḥazm in his large epistle: “It is spurious, forged, and false”; otherwise, it has chains from the narration of ʿUmar

and his son, and from Jābir, Ibn ʿAbbās, and Anas—all with different wordings, the closest of them to this expression being the one narrated by Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil*, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr in [*Jāmiʿ*] *Bayān al-ʿilm*, both from Ibn ʿUmar, who said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘The likeness of my Companions is that of the stars by which guidance is sought; by whomever’s statement you take you will be guided.’”

Another expression was narrated by al-Dāraquṭnī and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, from Jābir who said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘The likeness of my Companions in my nation is that of the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” Now of course, none of these are authentic in the least, which is why Aḥmad said, “This hadith is unauthentic,” and al-Bazzār said, “These words are not authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ.” That said, al-Bayhaqī did mention in *Kitāb al-ʿitiqād*:⁸ “We have narrated it in a hadith that is fully connected [*mauṣūl*] but with a chain that isn’t strong, and in another hadith that is interrupted [*munqaṭiʿ*]. And there is an authentic hadith that conveys the same meaning, and it is the raised [*marfūʿ*] hadith of Abū Mūsā that states: ‘The stars are a source of security for the heavens, and when the stars wane, the heavens will bring what is promised you; I am a source of security for my Companions, and when I go, they will receive what they are promised; and my Companions are a source of security for my nation, and when my Companions pass, my nation will receive what it is promised.’ This was narrated by Muslim.”⁹

As the reader is aware, *al-Taqrīr wa al-taḥbīr* deals with the fundamentals [of jurisprudence] and discusses proofs and universal maxims that are related to legal rulings. So by the author presenting this hadith and citing the narrations that

support it, there is the distinct impression that this hadith is used as evidence in legal rulings. This strengthens al-Qārī's point that the hadith rises to the level of good [*ḥasan*] due to its numerous chains, even if, by looking at some of its chain, it is not suitable for proof.

How can it be stated with certainty that Ja'far is guilty of what he is accused of when the Imam and Proof of Islam, al-Ghazālī, stated in *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* that “It is not permissible to ascribe an enormity to a Muslim without due verification [*taḥqīq*]”?¹⁰ How can it be thought that this hadith in particular is forged, and how can it be allowed to ignore Ibn Ḥajar's concluding remark about Ja'far where he said, “Muslima b. Qāsim said, ‘He died in the battle trenches in the year 258 [AH]. He was from Basra and was reliable. Abū Dāwūd narrated from him, and Abū 'Alī included him among the Sheikhs of Abū Dāwūd”?

This is a clear statement from Ibn Ḥajar affirming Ja'far's reliability, and the previous statements about him carry several possible interpretations and are inconsistent [*muḍṭarib*]; so let this affirmation of [his] reliability take precedence over all of that.

Notice his comment that “Abū Dāwūd narrated from him,” and add to that those who narrated this hadith—who were mentioned in detail earlier. This should make it clear to you that Abū Dāwūd and others did not consider him discredited, and even if that was established, the fact still remains that there is a degree of reliability confirmed for the narrators of this hadith—as mentioned earlier—and this suffices us.

The insightful critic does not restrict himself to the judgments of others, and Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ was one such insightful critic who was clearly knowledgeable of the hidden defects

[*‘ilal*] in hadith, and someone of his stature is free to narrate from anyone whom he deems sound—even if that person is considered discredited by others. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ said:

This is why al-Bukhārī cited from a group [of narrators] who were discredited by others, such as ‘Ikrima the client [*mawlā*] of Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ, Ismā‘īl b. Abī Uways, ‘Āṣim b. ‘Alī, ‘Amr b. Marzūq, and others. And Muslim cited from Suwayd b. Sa‘īd and a group that was well-known for being discredited, and Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī did the same.¹¹

Seventhly, there now remains no one except Ibn Ḥazm, and he is alone in his claim, so we leave him with his issue. That said, let us mention Ibn Ḥazm’s statement that Ustādh Ṭāhā ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf [the editor] relied upon in his judgment that the hadith in question is forged. Regarding the hadith Ibn Ḥazm said the following:

As for the narration: “My Companions are like the stars. . .” it is a narration missing some text [*sāqiṭa*]. This hadith was narrated to me by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Umar b. Anas al-‘Udhri ḡ Abū Dharr ḡ ‘Abd b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Harawī al-Anṣārī ḡ ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḥmad al-Dāraquṭnī ḡ al-Qāḍī Aḥmad Kāmil b. Kāmil Khalaf ḡ ‘Abdullāh b. Rawḥ ḡ Salām b. Sulaymān ḡ al-Ḥārith b. Ghaṣan ḡ al-A‘mash, from Abū Sufyān, from Jābir, who said, “The Messenger of Allah ؐ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” I, Abū Muḥammad [Ibn Ḥazm] say: Abū Sufyān is weak, this al-Ḥārith b. Ghaṣin is Abū Wahb al-Thaqafī, and Salām b. Sulaymān narrates forged hadith—and this is undoubtedly from them—so this narration is missing text and from a route whose chain is weak.¹²

His statement that this is a “narration missing some text,” is a ruling from him that only applies to the chain, and this is indicated by his frivolous statement that it is “from a route whose chain is weak.” This ruling, therefore, applies only to the chain and not the text of the hadith, and how can it be otherwise, when the meaning of the hadith is supported by similar wordings, such as the one mentioned from al-Bayhaqī, and is conferred strength by its numerous chains, which was mentioned by al-Bayhaqī, too, when he said that it was narrated in expedient form [*mursal*]? An expedient report is considered proof-worthy according to the majority, and this was discussed in detail by our Grandfather, the gallant and noble Aḥmad Riḍā, in *al-Hād al-kāf fī aḥkām al-dī‘āf* (The Guide and Sufficiency Regarding the Rulings of Weak Reports). Ibn Ḥazm’s claim that “this is undoubtedly from them [i.e., forged reports]” is rejected, for it is a statement without any proof and it likewise contradicts his own statement that its chain is weak. Weakness in a chain does not entail that the text of a hadith is weak—much less entailing that the hadith is forged. Ibn Ḥazm went on to say:

And Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Namarī wrote that this hadith was also narrated via the route of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. Zayd al-‘Ammī from his father, from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab, from Ibn ‘Umar, and via the route of Ḥamza al-Jazarī, from Nāfi‘, from Ibn ‘Umar. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. Zayd and his father are discarded [*matrūk*] and Ḥamza al-Jazarī is unidentifiable.

I say: So what? The most you have uncovered is the weakness of the chain, which does not entail forgery. He then said:

And al-Namarī wrote to me: “Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Sa‘īd narrated to us that Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mufrij narrated to them, saying, ‘Muḥammad b. Ayyūb al-Ṣamūt narrated to us, saying, “Al-Bazzār said to us, ‘As for what has been reported from the Prophet ﷺ that “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided,” that is not authentically reported from him ﷺ.’”

I say: Al-Bazzār’s statement that it “is not authentically reported” is explicit insomuch as it expresses that the hadith did not reach the level of “authentic” [*ṣaḥīḥ*] that is expressed according to the technical nomenclature adopted by the hadith scholars.

However, the fact that it is not authentic [*ṣaḥīḥ*] does not negate that it is good [*ḥasan*], much less establishing that it is weak or forged. For more details on this, see *al-Hād al-kāf fī aḥkām al-dī‘āf* of our Grandfather, the gallant Imam Aḥmad Riḍā—may his secret be sanctified.

Abū Muḥammad [Ibn Ḥazm] said:

It is apparent that this narration is not established at all, so it is undoubtedly false because Allah Most High describes His Prophet ﷺ, saying, *«He does not speak from desires. It is but revelation revealed»* [Quran 53:3-4]. Hence, if his words ﷺ regarding the Shariah are all true, then they are all undoubtedly from Allah Most High; and whatever comes from Allah will not have any discrepancy in it, as He says, *«And had it been from other than Allah they would have found much discrepancy [differing] therein»* [Quran: 4:82].

Ibn Ḥazm’s claim that this narration “is undoubtedly false” is without proof and it is recklessness that cannot be taken lightly. What is more amazing is the fact that when he spoke about the chain, he admitted that it was weak, and then went on to cite words from al-Bazzār that do not indicate its weakness, and then he concluded by ruling that the text was definitely false and forged!

And what is most astonishing is his attempt to infer proof for his position by quoting Allah’s words: *«He does not speak from desires. It is but revelation revealed»* [Quran 53:3-4]!

How can this prove that the aforementioned hadith is false and forged? How can he allege that the Prophet ﷺ would have spoken from his desires had he uttered this statement to his Companions? Where does Ibn Ḥazm get the idea that if the Companions disagreed about something—with one party believing that it is allowed and another party believing that it is unlawful—that they would have ruled about it according to their desires, and that by saying what he said, the Prophet ﷺ would have approved of them following their desires? This is the import of Ibn Ḥazm’s words that have been quoted in the Journal of the Islamic University of Madinah. Is this anything but a closing of [the doors] of independent scholarly effort [*ijtihād*], a prohibition of following [*taqlīd*] the Companions, and an attempt to slam shut the door of qualified scholarship and shun the Prophet’s ﷺ permission for his Companions to engage in scholarly effort?

In *Mishkāt al-maṣābil* there is a report from Mu‘ādh b. Jabal ؓ that mentions the Prophet ﷺ dispatching him to Yemen. When the Prophet ﷺ sent him he asked, “How will you judge the cases brought before you?” Mu‘ādh replied, “I will judge with the Book of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ then

asked, “And how will you judge if you do not find the ruling in the Book of Allah?” “I will then judge with the Sunna of Allah’s Messenger,” replied Mu‘adh. The Prophet ﷺ then asked, “And how will you judge if you do not find the ruling in the Sunna of Allah’s Messenger?” “I will exert my best efforts to arrive at an opinion,” he replied. The Prophet ﷺ then patted him on his chest and said, “All praise is due to Allah who enabled the Prophet’s emissary to answer in satisfaction to Allah’s Messenger!”¹³ This was narrated by al-Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Dārimī.¹⁴

As you can plainly see, Ibn Ḥazm defamed the Companions and accused them of vain desires, and the logical implication of this forces him to admit that all hadith reports should be rejected in their entirety—the authentic, good, or weak—for, according to him, the Companion’s probity is null and they cannot be trusted. Additionally, Ibn Ḥazm’s claim against this hadith doesn’t merely apply to it alone; it transcends it and must also be applied to the other reports in which it is implicitly or explicitly commanded to follow the Companions. By the logic of his position he must reject the Prophet’s statements ﷺ : “Follow those after me: Abū Bakr and ‘Umar,” “Stick to my Sunna, and the Sunna of the Rightly Guided Caliphs; stick to it with your molar teeth,”¹⁵ and the aforementioned hadith of Mu‘adh, and other hadith reports that indicate the command to obey them.

Ibn Ḥazm’s position does not simply entail rejecting the Sunna, but it also entails rejecting the Book [Quran] with the same proof he provided. His position dictates that the Companions must be looked at with suspicion in everything. Take one example that was quoted in the Journal of the Islamic University of Madinah and you will realize how extensive and far-reaching Ibn Ḥazm’s odious belief really

was. The Journal quotes him as saying:

It is inconceivable that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would command that every speaker among the Companions ﷺ be followed, even though their ranks include one who declares something lawful and another who declares it unlawful. If this were true it would be lawful (following Samura b. Jundub ﷺ) to sell alcohol; it would be permissible (according to Abū Ṭalḥa ﷺ) for one who is fasting to eat snow, and it would be unlawful according to the others; it would be allowable (following ʿAlī, ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥa, Abū Ayyūb, and Ubayy b. Kaʿb) to leave off the full ritual ablution [*ghusl*] if one did not ejaculate during intercourse, which is considered unlawful according to ʿĀʾisha and Ibn ʿUmar; and it would be lawful (following ʿUmar) to sell dates before they are ripe, which is unlawful according to others . . .

All of these [positions] are narrated with authentic chains in our possession, but we didn't mention them for fear of being long-winded. During the era of the Prophet ﷺ the Companions would offer their opinions and when these things would reach him he would declare who is right or wrong among them—and after his death ﷺ that was even more widespread and detestable.¹⁶

The significant passage here is his statement that it “is inconceivable”. Insomuch as he considered it a proof, why didn't he say that every report mentioning the command to follow the Companions is also forged? Why did he differentiate between them when his self-styled proof didn't call for such detail? This demonstrates that it is Ibn Ḥazm and his ilk who have fallen into the pit of vain desires; the Companions and those who follow their footsteps and

guidance are innocent of his accusations.

Ibn Ḥazm’s concluding claim that during “the era of the Prophet ﷺ the Companions would offer their opinions and when these things would reach him he would declare who is right or wrong among them—and after his death ﷺ that was even more widespread and detestable,” contradicts his initial claim, for it has not reached [us] that the Prophet ﷺ would repudiate the one who was mistaken, or demand his repentance. Similarly, it has not reached [us] that he would punish the one who acted upon the view of the one who was mistaken—and this is an implicit permission from the Prophet ﷺ for them to exert their best efforts to arrive at opinions, which in turn implies a command for others who have not attained the rank of independent scholarly judgment to follow them. If, as Ibn Ḥazm claimed, the Prophet ﷺ would not support the one who had a mistaken opinion, how would he have dealt with the hadith of Mu‘ādh, which is a tacit and unqualified permission for Mu‘ādh, and a command for others to follow him in all of his judgments, right or wrong?

The examples that Ibn Ḥazm gave prove our earlier contention, that he sought to forbid following the Companions and attempted to eliminate completely the following of qualified scholarship [*taqlīd*]. Such positions lead to the inevitable conclusion that no one should follow anyone in matters in which there are disagreements, and this in turn opens the door of independent scholarship for all sorts and sundry who are unqualified. If *taqlīd* as such is forbidden, how is it allowable for those who call themselves Salafis—and who do not believe in following the Imams—to put themselves forward as imams and invite the laity to their way?

Ibn Ḥazm concluded his statement with an explicit defamation of the Companions ﷺ. His statement that “after his death ﷺ that was even more widespread and detestable,” clearly establishes that he did not give the Companions’ opinions any value whatsoever, and that instead, he considered their opinions blameworthy errors—and there is no movement or power except by Allah, the Most High and Tremendous!

In addition to all that is said above, we would like to include an important notice regarding Ibn Ḥazm’s habit that Ṭāhā ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf [the editor] and other Salafis rely upon, and a bit about Ibn Ḥazm’s persistence in rejecting authentic hadith on account of his desires. Imam al-Nawawī mentioned in his introduction to his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Shaykh Abū ‘Amr b. al-Ṣalāḥ—may Allah have mercy upon him—said:

And the same may be said regarding al-Bukhārī’s comments that were expressed in definite terms: they are affirmed in the manner we mentioned earlier, such as when he says, “So-and-so said,” “So-and-so narrated,” or “So-and-so mentioned,” and so on. Abū Muḥammad Ibn Ḥazm al-Zāhiri was wrong to consider such statements as interruptions [*inqitā‘*] that diminish their authenticity. He took recourse in that in order to support his corrupt position regarding the lawfulness of musical instruments and his claim that there is not a single authentic hadith prohibiting them. This was his answer to the hadith of Abū ‘Āmir or Abū Mālik al-Ash‘arī from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said, “There shall most certainly be among my nation a folk who declare silk, spirits, and musical instruments lawful. . . .”¹⁷ Ibn Ḥazm claimed that even though this was narrated by al-Bukhārī it

is not authentic because al-Bukhārī said about it, “Hishām b. ‘Ammār said. . . [and he mentioned it with his chain]” and that chain is interrupted between al-Bukhārī and Hishām. That is a mistake from Ibn Ḥazm for several reasons: [one] There is no interruption in this hadith whatsoever, for al-Bukhārī met Hishām and heard from him . . .¹⁸

Since we have already discussed Ibn Ḥazm’s rejection of the hadith in question and quoted his statement about the Companions—both of which are the strongest proofs that he would pick and choose his positions and follow his desires—let us now detail some examples of his foul and reckless defamation of the noble Companion Abū al-Ṭufayl ‘Āmir b. Wāthila ؓ, whose hadith were narrated by Muslim and others, and are well-known to the people of knowledge. Ibn Ḥazm said that he is flawed [*maqduḥ*]. This was quoted by al-Shawkānī, a fellow Zāhirī, in his *Nayl al-awṭār*. Al-Shawkānī mentioned the hadith recorded in *al-Muntaqā*¹⁹ from Mu‘ādh ؓ who said, “While the Prophet ﷺ was at Tabūk and the sun would pass the meridian, he would combine the Afternoon and Forenoon Prayers before he started his journey. If he started his journey before the sun passed the meridian, he would delay the Afternoon Prayer until the time he would stop for the Forenoon Prayer. He would do the same for the Dusk Prayer; if the sun set before he began his journey, he would combine the Dusk and Evening Prayers [at that time]. If he began a journey before the sun had set, he would combine the both of them at the time of the Evening Prayer.”²⁰ (Aḥmad [5:241], Abū Dāwūd [1208], and al-Tirmidhī [553]) Al-Shawkānī commented after mentioning this hadith:

As for the hadith of Mu^ʿadh, it was also narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Ḥākim, al-Dāraquṭnī, and al-Bayhaqī. Al-Tirmidhī said, “It is *ḥasan-gharīb* [good but less well-known] reported singularly [*tafarrada bihi*] by Qutayba,” and it is well-known among the people of knowledge that the hadith of Mu^ʿadh is from the hadith of Abū Zubayr, on the authority of Abū Ṭufayl, from Mu^ʿadh, and it does not contain any mention of joining two prayers in the earlier time—meaning the one narrated by Muslim. Abū Dāwūd said, “This hadith is disclaimed [*munkar*], and there is no established hadith regarding the joining of two prayers in the earlier time.” Abū Sa^ʿīd b. Yūnus said, “No one besides Qutayba narrated this hadith.”

It is said that he [Qutayba] blundered, and al-Ḥākim and Ibn Ḥazm said that it has a hidden defect. Ibn Ḥazm stated, “It is transmitted [*mu^ʿan^ʿan*] from Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, from Abū al-Ṭufayl, and he is not known to have a narration.” He also said, “Abū al-Ṭufayl is flawed because he used to carry the flag of al-Mukhtār and he [al-Mukhtār] believed in the doctrine of return [*al-raj^ʿa*].”²¹

Now al-Shawkānī did not agree with Ibn Ḥazm’s claim, for after quoting him he said:

I respond to that by saying that he only went out with al-Mukhtār to fight against al-Ḥusayn’s murderers, and he did not know of al-Mukhtār’s belief in the doctrine of return . . . and the basis for Abū al-Ṭufayl’s hadith is found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and Abū al-Ṭufayl is upright, reliable, and trustworthy.

Ibn Ḥazm’s words aptly demonstrate his insolence and carelessness and show that he would pick and choose his rulings based on whim and desire. This is not simply a defamation of the Companion Abū al-Ṭufayl alone, but is a rejection of the principle in doctrine that all of the Companions are upright; to defame one Companion by negating his uprightness is to defame them all. This is the way of the Salafis: they are not concerned about the words they utter and they do not fear [Allah] or feel shame in their attempts to reject a hadith.

There remains one item in Ja‘far b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid’s biographical entry that warrants comment. Ja‘far narrated from Ibn ‘Umar in a raised [*marfū‘*] report that “No two people assemble for something good or evil except that they will be resurrected upon it [i.e., doing it],” and then he recited the verse, *﴿And when the souls are joined﴾* [Quran 81:7].

The judgment of certain hadith scholars that it is false—as [Ibn Ḥajar] posited in *al-Mīzān*, *Lisān al-mīzān*, and *Tanzīh al-sharī‘a*, and as Ibn ‘Adī posited when he said that “they are all false”—is ambiguous, and there is nothing in the text of the hadith that contravenes the principles of the Shariah, and it was never explained in what sense it is false. Therefore, no recourse can be taken in this judgment when details are called for.

Ja‘far narrated a hadith from Ibn ‘Abbās in which he said, “The Prophet ﷺ was born circumcised and with his umbilical cord cut.” Al-Dhahabī commented, saying that “the drawback of this [narration] is Ja‘far,” but that is rejected, for it does not revolve around Ja‘far alone; rather, it was narrated with various routes of transmission and in different wordings from Anas, al-‘Abbās b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Abū Hurayra, Ibn ‘Abbās, and Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ. All of these routes

were mentioned in detail by Imam al-Suyūṭī in *al-Khaṣā'is al-kubrā*.²²

Ibn Ḥajar said in *Afḍal al-qirā*, “It is authentically reported from al-Ḍiyā’ that the Prophet ﷺ was born circumcised and with his umbilical cord cut so that no one could see his private area. Al-Ḥākim added: ‘The reports concerning this are mass-transmitted.’” Ibn Ḥajar went on to say regarding the report’s authenticity and the claim of it being mass-transmitted,²³ “And they objected to the ruling that it is authentic, saying that all of the reports to that effect are weak, and they opposed the claim that it is mass-transmitted, saying that if it is not authentic, how can it be mass-transmitted?”

I say: It is established in the fundamentals [of hadith sciences] that a weak hadith is strengthened by numerous routes of transmission, so it can rise to the level of a good, or even an authentic report. There is no fault found with al-Ḍiyā’ for ruling that the hadith is authentic due to its multiple routes of transmission, the divertive evidence [*qarīna*] he saw for it, and the fact that it was widely circulated and well-known. By his statement that “the reports concerning this are mass-transmitted,” al-Ḥākim did not intend the technical meaning of mass-transmission; he meant to say that the report was wide-spread and widely circulated. So even though the hadith does not attain the level of a mass-transmitted report there is the impression that it was accepted, which does in turn strengthen it and allow the critic to rule that it is sound—even if its chain is weak—which is why al-Ḍiyā’ ruled as he did.

Al-Suyūṭī agreed with al-Ḥākim’s view that it is mass-transmitted, as can be seen by reviewing his *al-Khaṣā'is al-kubrā*. Mass-transmission does not require some of the

prerequisites for judging a report authentic, but even so, most—if not all—of the prerequisites are met with mass-transmitted reports, so their authenticity is established, and therefore al-Ḥākim’s claim that it is mass-transmitted is sound.

Ibn Ḥajar commented on this unique feature of the Prophet ﷺ, saying, “It has been said that many people were born circumcised, so it is not a unique feature. Moreover, Ibn al-Kalbī stated that Ādam and twelve Prophets after him were all born circumcised.” I say: Those who mention this unique feature do not intend to claim that it is a unique feature by which the Prophet ﷺ is distinguished from the other Prophets, but rather that it is something by which he is distinguished from the rest of men. Ibn al-Kalbī’s statement quoted by Ibn Ḥajar was also mentioned by Imam al-Suyūṭī in *al-Khaṣā’iṣ al-kubrā* with the wording: “It reached us via Ka’b al-Aḥbār that he said, ‘We find in some of our scriptures that Ādam was created circumcised, along with twelve other Prophets from the children of his son who were created circumcised, and twelve Prophets from his children after them who were created circumcised—the last of them was Muḥammad ﷺ—and the others included Idrīs, Nūḥ, Sām (Samuel), Lūṭ, Yūsuf, Mūsā, Sulaymān, Shu‘ayb, Yaḥyā, Hūd, and Ṣāliḥ, may Allah send prayers and salutations upon them all.’”

This clearly indicates that the Prophet’s ﷺ uniqueness in this is with respect to mankind in general, excluding the aforementioned Prophets ﷺ. In the same book mentioned earlier, Ibn Ḥajar said in conclusion:

One of the hadith masters [*Ḥuffāz*] narrated with his chain up to Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ that ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib circumcised him

[the Prophet ﷺ] seven days after his birth, held a banquet in his honor, and named him Muḥammad. And in a rejected chain it is reported that he was circumcised when he was with Ḥalīma during the time when his chest was opened.

I say: There is another report from Ibn ʿAbbās that differs from this and it is further supported by numerous routes of transmission. So in this case of mutual contradiction [*taʿāruḍ*] precedence should be given to the report containing Ibn ʿAbbās and others, which is supported and strengthened by numerous routes of transmission. Preference should be given to it over the narration reported singularly [*tafarrud*] by some of the hadith masters who narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās alone via a disclaimed [*munkar*] chain, stating that the Prophet ﷺ was circumcised when he was with Ḥalīma. The concluding remark is that the hadith, “The Prophet ﷺ was born circumcised and with his umbilical cord cut,” is not singularly reported from Jaʿfar so there is no scope for saying that it is false.

Conclusion

We wish to conclude with the words of the Grand Shaykh, our Grandfather the gallant and unique, Shaykh Aḥmad Riḍā—May the Master and the Giver of bounties grant him mercy. He g said in point nineteen of his treatise *al-Hād al-kāf fī aḥkām al-dī‘āf*, which is comprised of great benefits and laden with important points: “The intellect bears witness that weak hadith in the likes of this area are acceptable.”

I say, and with Allah is all success: In addition to all of the aforementioned texts and quotes, if the intellect is sound then it is a sufficient witness that a weak hadith may be given consideration in this area and its weakness overlooked, for there is no certainty that it is false, no matter what deficiencies are to be found in the chain. A liar might speak the truth, and who knows, perhaps he narrated this hadith correctly. In the *al-Muqaddima* of Imam Abū ‘Umar Taqī al-Dīn al-Shahrazūrī [better known as Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ] it is mentioned:

When they say that a particular hadith is unauthentic [*ghayr ṣahīḥ*] it is not a conclusive statement that it is a lie in the self-same reality [*fī nafs al-amr*], for it might be true in the self-same reality; what it means is that its chain was unauthentic according to the aforementioned conditions.²⁴

In *Tadrīb al-rāwī* it states: “When it is said that a hadith is weak it means . . . that its chain was unauthentic according to the aforementioned conditions, not that it is a lie in the self-same reality, for it is conceivable that a liar speaks truthfully.”²⁵

Judging [hadith reports] to be authentic or weak is done by looking at the apparent, for it is possible that a weak hadith is really authentic, and vice versa. Al-Munāwī, the verifying scholar, stated in *Fathḥ al-Qadīr*: “Describing [a hadith] as good, authentic, or weak is only a speculation regarding its chain. In reality, it is conceivable that an authentic narration could be wrong and that a weak narration could be authentic.” In his discussion on the issue of prostration on the corner of a turban, al-Munāwī stated:

“Weak” does not necessarily mean “false” in the self-same reality; rather, it means that which is not established via the conditions that are well-considered according to the traditionalists [*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*], all the while it is conceivable that it could be authentic in reality; it is therefore allowable for there to be a divertive indication [*qarīma*] with it that establishes that and shows that a weak narrator was correct in that particular text, and can be judged accordingly.

In [Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī’s] *al-Mawḍū‘āt al-kubrā* it is mentioned: “The verifying scholars are of the view that authenticity [*ṣiḥḥa*], goodness [*ḥusn*], and weakness [*d*

a^cf] are only according to the outward, and that there is a possibility that the authentic could be forged and vice versa. This point was mentioned by Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī.”

I say: This is the secret that explains why the numerous narrations that the noble hadith scholars judged—according to their methodology—to be weak and without merit were explicitly accepted and relied upon by the scholars of the heart—those who know the Lord: the Gnostic Imams and masters who receive spiritual unveilings—may Allah Most High sanctify us with their splendid secrets and enlighten our hearts with their beautiful and resplendent lights!

The Gnostics raise these reports back to the Prophet ﷺ with expressions of definitiveness and conclusiveness, and bring many inspired and divinely-sourced hadith reports, none of which the [exoteric] scholars can discover in their collections, notebooks, or sciences. This in turn leads many of the exoterists to defame and malign the honor of the Gnostics, much less bring benefit to them, even though the Gnostics were—and exaltation is for Allah—far more fearful of and knowledgeable about Allah than these defamers, and were far more cautious in attributing words to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as Allah said, *«Each party rejoicing in what it has»* [Quran 23:53], and, *«Indeed, your Lord knows best the one who strays from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly-guided»* [Quran 16:125].

Speaking about the hadith: “My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided,” Imam al-Sha^crānī said in *al-Mīzān al-kubrā*: “Even if this hadith is criticized by the hadith scholars, it is considered authentic by the people of spiritual unveiling [*Ahl al-Kashf*].” Al-Sha^crānī also said in *Kashf al-ghumma ‘an jamī‘ al-umma*, at the end of the first volume in the chapter on the virtues of

remembrance, in the section on the command to send prayers upon the Prophets:

He ﷺ would say, “Whoever sends prayers upon me, his heart shall be purified from hypocrisy just as a garment is purified by water.” He ﷺ would also say, “Whoever says ‘May Allah send prayers upon Muḥammad’ will find that seventy doors of mercy are opened for him, and Allah shall cast love for him in the hearts of the people, and no one will hate him except one who has hypocrisy in his heart.” Our Sheikh ﷺ said: “We have narrated this hadith and the one preceding it from some of the Gnostics, on the authority of al-Khaḍir ؑ, from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. According to us, both are authentic at the highest levels of authenticity, even if the hadith scholars did not affirm them according to the dictates of their technical nomenclature.”

In *al-Mīzān al-kubrā* in the section on the impossibility of any opinions of the *Mujtahids* [independent scholars capable of exercising *ijtihād*] opposing the Shariah, al-Shaʿrānī quoted his Sheikh, Sīdī ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ—may his mighty secret be sanctified—who said:

Just as it is said that everything the hadith scholars narrated with authentic and fully connected chains ends with the Real, the Exalted and Sublime, the same is said regarding that which is transmitted by the people of sound spiritual unveiling regarding the knowledge of the esoteric spiritual reality [*ʿilm al-ḥaqīqa*].

The takeaway from all of this is that the Saints possess a way that is higher and loftier than the outward chain of narration,

which is why my master, Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī رحمته الله—may his lofty secret be sanctified—said to the opponents of his time, “You take your knowledge dead from the dead, but we take our knowledge from the Ever-Living who does not die!” This was quoted by my master, Imam al-Sha‘rānī, in his blessed and superb book *al-Yawāqīt wa al-jawāhir*, at the end of part forty-seven.

The leader of the people of spiritual unveiling and the reviver of the religion and way, al-Shaykh al-Akbar Ibn ‘Arabī, declared certain hadith reports authentic, even though they were considered weak according to the methodology used in the science of hadith. One example is found in section seventy-three of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya*, which was cited by al-Sha‘rānī in *al-Yawāqīt*.

In a similar vein, the Seal of the Hadith Masters [*Khātam al-ḥuffāz*] and noble imam Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī—may his mighty secret be sanctified—enjoyed the immense favor of beholding the resplendent wakeful vision of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم seventy-five times, and in the Prophet’s blessed presence صلى الله عليه وسلم he was able to verify the status of many hadith, and on the basis of his wakeful vision he declared many hadith reports authentic even though they were judged weak according to the methodology of the hadith scholars. The details regarding this are found in al-Sha‘rānī’s *al-Mīzān al-kubrā*—may his luminous secret be sanctified. Whoever wishes to read more may refer to it.

This valuable and exquisite benefit that I have documented—praise Allah—is for the benefit of my brethren in the religion, and it deserves to be engraved on the tablet of the heart, for very few are aware of it, and many feet have slipped in this area:

*Many, dear friend, are the robbers that lie
In wait at the bordering wastelands nigh;
But those who can escort and see you through
Safely and soundly, my friend, are but few.*

All of the dimensions of this topic have been explored, and I assert that no matter how much the chain of the hadith in question is attacked and discredited, it can not be conclusively stated that it is false, for there is a possibility that it is sound in reality. And whenever truthfulness is considered a possibility and the intelligent person apprehends benefit without harm, he acts upon it.

Religious and worldly affairs are run according to hope; so what intellect dictates that one must renounce acting upon this hadith after seeing deficiency in its chain? Who knows? Perhaps the hadith is true and you have left yourself bereft of virtue, and if it is a lie, you have nothing to lose by acting upon it. Understand this well and be firm, and do not be among the fanatics [*muta‘aṣṣibūn*].

To illustrate this point let me strike a similitude: Suppose there is a man who suffers from weakness and general malaise and someone says to him, “So-and-so, the skilled doctor, advises patients suffering from your ailment to grind up gold leaf in a golden mortar and pestle and mix it with *khīzrāna al-misk* (a medicine found in India), or to mix it vigorously with honey and place it in the palm of one’s hand and eat it.” A sound mind would never assume that using such a method of treatment is unlawful until it is proven that there exists an authentic chain that is fully connected to that doctor. It is sufficient to know that there is no harm associated with this method according to the fundamentals of medicine—otherwise one will constantly examine the copies

of *al-Qarābādīm*²⁶ and try to ascertain the status of those who narrated it. It is feared that such foolishness will deprive him of the benefits and uses found in those medicines, and he will be unable to help himself or others.

This is the simile with meritorious actions [*faḍā'il al-a'māl*]. If we hear of a similar benefit and the purified Sacred Law does not prohibit it, why should we go out of our way to verify it according to the methodology of the hadith scholars? If the hadith is authentic then well and good, and if not, we still find a pleasant fruit from our good intentions: ﴿Do you await for us except one of the two best things?﴾ [Quran: 9:52].

May Allah Most High send prayers, blessings, and salutations upon our liege lord Muḥammad, and upon his family and Companions.

Dictated by the one poor unto the mercy of his Self-sufficient Lord:

Muḥammad Akhtar Riḍā Khān al-Qādirī al-Azhari

- may he be forgiven

Appendix



A Survey of Works that Mention the Hadith “My Companions are like the Stars”

1. *Sharḥ Musnad Abī Hanīfa*¹(1:520)

“From ‘Alqama b. Yahyā, from Ya‘mur: ‘I was once with a companion of mine in the city of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ when suddenly, we saw [. . .] ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Umar [. . .]. I said to my companion, “Would you like that we go to him and ask him about preordainment (*qadr*) [i.e., about faith in it and whether it should be affirmed or negated, due to the disagreements of the people about it]?” He replied, “Yes,” so I said, “So let me be the one who asks him because I know him better than you.” So we approached ‘Abdullāh and I said to him, “O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! We [the Followers] travel about in the lands [i.e., we go around from place to place, and some of us are in lands wherein there is much talk about belief in preordainment] and might arrive in a land in which there are people saying that there is no preordainment, so how do we respond to them?” He replied, “Convey to them [inform them on my behalf] that I am innocent of them.” [and this contains a proof that the statement of a Companion

¹ The commentator’s remarks on Arabic vowelization, declension, and the lexical origins of words have been omitted for ease of reading. —*Translator*

is a proof², as the Prophet’s statement ﷺ indicates: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided’; he continued:] ‘If only I had some helpers I would have waged jihad against them [for spreading errors in religion—if they were gathered together in a particular land].’ Then he began to narrate to us [from the Prophet ﷺ], saying, ‘Once when we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he had a small group of Companions with him, there suddenly appeared a handsome young man [in age and strength] with hair touching his shoulders, and of pleasant scent wearing white garments. He said, “Peace be unto you, O Messenger of Allah . . .”’”

2. *‘Umdat al-qārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (16:104)

Al-Masūr said to Ibn ‘Abbās, “I will never argue with you.” He mentioned points related to the Companions and their debates regarding legal rulings and their referral to the revealed texts. This also indicates [the validity] of accepting a report from a single person [i.e., a non mass-transmitted report], even if he is a Follower [*Tābi‘ī*]. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said, “If the meaning of ‘following’ in his ﷺ statement ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow

2 “[A]nd this contains a proof that the statement of a Companion is a proof”—Wahb b. Jarīr › his father › al-A‘mash › Abū Ṣāliḥ › Abū Hurayra who reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “My Companions are like the stars; whoever follows any of them will be guided.” In his biographical entry for Zayd al-‘Ammī, Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād said, “‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. Zayd al-‘Ammī narrated to us from his father, from Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyab, from ‘Umar in a raised report: [The Prophet ﷺ said] “I asked my Lord regarding the differences of my Companions after me, so Allah revealed to me: ‘O Muḥammad! Surely, your Companions are in my sight as the stars; some of them are more luminous than others. So whoever takes anything from that wherein they differ then he is upon guidance in My sight.’—and this is false.”

you will be guided’ was with respect to formal legal verdicts [*fatwa*], Ibn ‘Abbās wouldn’t have needed to establish proof for his claim. Rather, he would have said to al-Masūr, ‘I am a star and you are a star; so whichever of us is followed by he who comes after us then he will be sufficed.’ What this means—as al-Muzanī and other verifying scholars stated—is that it is with respect to their transmissions, for all of them are upright. This [hadith] indicates giving the people of virtue their just due, and it also shows the fairness of the Companions with each other. It also shows that when the Companions disagreed on a matter, the proof was not found in the statement of a particular one among them unless there was a proof that must be submitted to, from the Book or the Sunna. . . .”

3. *Al-Istidhkār* (4:7)

“Of the jurisprudence this contains: When the Companions differ there is no one among them whose statement is a proof against the rest, unless accompanied by a proof that must be submitted to, hailing from the Book or the Sunna. See how Ibn ‘Abbās and al-Masūr differed, and neither of them had a proof against the other until Ibn ‘Abbās presented his evidence from the Sunna and was successful.

This shows you that the [Prophet’s ﷺ] statement, ‘My Companions are like the stars. . . ,’ is understood according to the exegesis of al-Muzanī and others, which states that it is with respect to transmissions. That is because all of them are upright and reliable, and so it is obligatory to accept what each of them have transmitted. If they were like the stars with respect to their opinions and independent scholarly judgments Ibn ‘Abbās would have said to al-Masūr when

they disagreed, ‘You are a star and I am a star, so therefore you are fine; and whichever of us someone follows he will be guided,’ and he wouldn’t have needed to seek clarity and proof from the Sunna to establish the validity of his viewpoint.

The same is said with respect to the rest of the Companions—may Allah be pleased with all of them. When they differ then their judgment is like that of Ibn ‘Abbās and al-Masūr, as they were the first ones to recite: *﴿So if you dispute about anything then refer it back to Allah and His Messenger﴾* [Quran 4:59].

The scholars say: ‘During the Prophet’s lifetime [we seek recourse] with the Book of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ, and when he is taken [i.e., passed away] we seek recourse with his Sunna.’ Consider Ibn Mas‘ūd. He was informed that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī said regarding the sister and daughter and granddaughter of one’s son that the daughter receives one half and the sister receives one half, while the granddaughter receives nothing [of inheritance]. Abū Mūsā said, ‘Bring Ibn Mas‘ūd, for he shall agree with us.’ So when he came, Ibn Mas‘ūd said, ‘I was wrong and not of those who were guided [on this issue].’”

4. *Al-Tambīd* (4:263)

“Ibn Abī ‘Umar › Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna › Zayd b. Aslam › Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥunayn › from his father who said, ‘When at al-‘Araj, Ibn ‘Abbās and al-Masūr b. Makhrama disputed about one in a consecrated *iḥrām* state [for Hajj or ‘Umra] and whether or not he can wash his head with water. They sent me out to ask Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, and lo and behold, I happened upon him as he was bathing near a well. I greeted

him, and then he raised his head and covered his chest with his garment—and I was looking at his chest. I said, “Your cousin, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās, sent me to ask you how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would wash his head while he was in a consecrated *iḥrām* state.” So Abū Ayyūb took a handful of water and poured it over his head and rubbed it [with his hands] through his scalp. Then he turned and said, “This is how I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do it.” Al-Masūr said, “By Allah, I will never doubt you.”

Of the jurisprudence this hadith contains: When the Companions differ there is no one among them whose statement is a proof against the rest, unless it is accompanied by a proof that must be submitted to, hailing from the Book or the Sunna. Don’t you see how Ibn ‘Abbās and al-Masūr b. Makhrama, who were from the jurists of the Companions—even if they were the youngest of them—differed, yet neither of the two had a proof against the other, until Ibn ‘Abbās presented his evidence from the Sunna and was successful. This shows you that the [Prophet’s ﷺ] statement, ‘My Companions are like the stars. . .’ is understood according to the exegesis of al-Muzanī and others, which states that it is with respect to transmissions, because all of them are reliable, trustworthy, and upright and so it is obligatory to accept what each of them have transmitted and reported from his Prophet ﷺ.”

5. *Bāriqa Maḥmūdīyya fī sharḥ al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadīyya wa al-sharīʿa al-Nabawīyya* (1:232)

“. . .his statement ﷺ: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

6. *Ādāb al-ʿishra fī dhikr al-ṣuḥba wa al-ikhwa* (1:9)

“. . .Due to his statement ﷺ: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

7. *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl min aḥādīth al-Rasūl* ﷺ (8:6369)

“From Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab ﷺ: ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ said, ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, ‘I asked my Lord regarding the differences of my Companions after me, so Allah revealed to me: ‘O Muḥammad! Surely, your Companions are in my sight as the stars in the heavens; some of them are stronger [more luminous] than others, and for each there is a light. So whoever takes anything from that wherein they differ then he is upon guidance in My sight.’”’” And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

8. *Ghidhā al-albāb fī sharḥ manzūmat al-ādāb* (1:35)

“. . .The raised [*marfūʿ*] hadith of ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās, and Jābir I: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’ This was narrated by al-Dārimī and others, and his chains are weak.”

9. *Ādāb al-ṣuḥba* (1:117)

“The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

10. *Tafsīr al-aḥlām* (1:428)

“The stars of guidance include the Companions of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ—may Allah be pleased with all of them—as well as the scholars and jurists, due the Prophet’s ﷺ statement: ‘My Companions are like the stars. . .’”

11. *Uṣūl al-Sarakhsī* (1:316, 2:108)

“Because the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

12. *Al-Lumac* (1:270)

“Due to his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

13. *Al-Mankhūl* (1:584)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

14. *Al-Mustasfā* (1:424)

“And he ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

15. *Anwār al-burūq fī anwā^c al-furūq* (8:274)

“And the Prophet ﷺ says, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

16. *I^lām al-muwaqqi^cin an Rabb al-^cālamīn* (2:308)

“And that is sufficed by the famous hadith, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

17. *Al-Baḥr al-muḥiṭ* (8:100)

“He ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

18. *Al-Taqrīr wa al-taḥbīr* (6:241)

“And he [al-Shāfi‘ī] sought to establish his position from the Prophet’s statement ﷺ: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

19. *Irshād al-fuḥūl ilā taḥqīq al-ḥaqq min ‘ilm al-uṣūl* (1:178)

“And similarly the hadith, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

20. *Kitāb al-ijtihād* (1:52)

Al-Juwaynī said, “[A]nd the report narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

21. *Qawāṭiʿ al-adilla fī al-uṣūl*

Al-Samʿānī said, “And he ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (1:390)

“And because the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (2:14)

“And regarding the Prophet’s statements, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided’ . . .” (2:15)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (3:11)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (3:12)

“[A]nd the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (3:25)

22. *Ijmāl al-iṣāba* (1:48)

“[B]y what was narrated from him ﷺ in which he said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

23. *Al-Ibhāj* (2:86)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

24. *Al-Iḥkām* [of *al-Āmidī*] (1:290, 4:198)

“As for the Sunna, there is his statement ﷺ: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

25. *Al-Inṣāf* [of *al-Baṭalyūsī*] (1:90)

“And the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

26. *Al-Burhān fī uṣūl al-fiqh* (2:889)

“[D]ue to his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

27. *Al-Tabṣira* (1:368)

“[H]is statement ﷺ: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

28. *Al-Mu‘tamad* (2:28)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

29. *Rawḍa al-nāẓir* (1:165)

“[H]is statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

30. *Al-Lumaʿ fī uṣūl al-fiqh* (1:51)

“[D]ue to his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

31. *Al-Mahṣūl* [of al-Rāzī] (4:196)

“[H]is statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

32. *Al-Muwāfaqāt* (4:125)

“And this meaning has been quoted from the Prophet ﷺ, for he said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

33. *Taysīr al-tahrīr* (4:307)

“He ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

34. *Ijābat al-sāʿil sharḥ bugyat al-āmil* (1:331)

“[T]he hadith, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

35. *Subul al-hudā wa al-rashād fī sīra Khayr al-‘ibād*

“[A]ll of them are *Mujtahids*, which is why he said ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (10:329)

“And al-Ṭabarānī and Ibn Mājah narrated from Ḥudhayfa g that [the Prophet ﷺ] said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (11:448)

36. *Ṭabaqāt al-Hanābila* (1:180)

“And the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

37. *Al-Wāfī bi al-wafāyāt* (2:362)

“[A]nd as for the Companions, there is his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

38. *Al-Awā’il* [of al-‘Askarī] (1:66)

“It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

39. *Mu‘jam al-udabā’* (1:108)

“[H]ence his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

40. *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (1:250)

“[A]nd his statements, ‘People are like the teeth of a comb but are only superior over others via well-being’; ‘People are like mines of gold and silver; the best of them in the times of ignorance is the best of them in Islam as long as they gain deep understanding of the religion’; ‘People are like camels; out of one hundred you can scarcely find one capable of riding’; ‘The believer is soft and easy-going like a camel led by a nose-ring; if it is called to halt upon a rock it will halt’; ‘The believer is unto another believer like a strong edifice; each part supports the other’; and ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

41. *Zahr al-ādāb wa thamar al-albāb* (1:10)

“[A]nd his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

42. *Mu‘jiz Aḥmad* (1:403)

“[I]t was as if he was looking at the Prophet’s statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

43. *Tāj al-‘arūs* (1:8719)

“[T]hat is because the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

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“And he ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (2:400)

“And the loftiest examples for the Muslim youth are the noble Companions, regarding whom the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’” (3:38)

45. *Aḍwā al-bayān fī idāḥ al-Qur’ān bi al-Qur’ān* (5:108)

“And that is sufficed with the famous hadith, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

46. *Tafsīr al-Rāzī* (1:269)

“[D]ue to his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

47. *Naẓm al-durar* [of al-Baqā‘ī] (4:493)

“. . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

48. *Tafsīr al-lubāb* [of Ibn ‘Ādil] (1:45)

“. . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

49. *Tafsīr al-Nīsābūrī* (1:68)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

50. *Al-Kashhāf* (3:390)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

51. *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* (2:120)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

52. *Tafsīr al-Haqqī* [*Rūḥ al-bayān*] (6:498)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

53. *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī* (1:47, 12:188)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

54. *Tafsīr Abū al-Su‘ūd* (5:135)

“ . . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

55. *Tafsīr al-Nasafī* (2:268)

“. . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

56. *Al-Shifā bi ta‘rīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* ﷺ (2:53)

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Follow those who come after me: Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.’” He also said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

57. *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya* [of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī] (1:22)

“And the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

58. *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā’* [of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī] (1:35)

“And for this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

59. *Mafāhīm islāmīyya* [Dr. ‘Āṣim Aḥmad al-Dasūqī] (1:192)

“The Companions are like the stars, guiding the bewildered and directing the misled. The Prophet ﷺ said about them, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

60. *Al-Sibāq ilā al-‘uqūl* [Dr. ‘Abdullāh Qādirī al-Ahdal]
(1:109)

“Like his statement, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

61. *Majallat al-tārīkh al-‘arabī* [Dr. ‘Abdullāh al-‘Uwayna]
(1:13861)

“. . . ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

62. *Jalā’ al-‘aynayn fī muḥākamat al-Aḥmadayn*
[Nu‘mān b. Maḥmūd b. ‘Abdullāh, Abū al-Barakāt Khayr al-Dīn al-Ālūsī] (1:208)

“[F]rom the hadith: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

63. *Al-Fatāwā al-ḥadīthīyya* (1:18)

“And he ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

64. *Ṭarīq al-najāt* [accompanied by *al-Muntakhabāt min al-maktūbāt al-ma‘šūmiyya*] (1:21)

“And the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

65. *Al-Fuṣūl min al-uṣūl* (3:299)

“It was reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

66. *Al-Mufaṣṣal fī al-radd ‘alā shubuhāt a‘dā’ al-Islām* (13:29)

“[A]nd so, his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided’. . .”

67. *Al-Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-aḥkām* [of al-Āmidī] (1:215)

“[B]y his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

68. *Al-Taqlīd wa al-iftā’ wa al-istiftā’* (1:33)

“[A]nd his statement ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

69. *Dirāsāt ḥawl shakhṣiyyat Abī Hurayra* (1:29)

“And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

70. *Mukhtaṣar minhāj al-sunna* (1:244)

“As for his statement, ‘My Companions are like the stars. . .’ it is a weak hadith that was weakened by the traditionalists

[*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*]. Al-Bazzār said, ‘This hadith is not authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or found in the relied-upon books of hadith.’”

71. *Uṣūl al-fiqh ‘alā manhaj Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (1:155)

“There are some weak hadith whose meanings are sound due to the existence of authentic proofs that corroborate their meaning, or due to the occurrence of something that proves them. However, it is not permissible to ascribe a weak hadith to the Prophet ﷺ because not everything whose meaning is sound necessarily comes from him ﷺ.”

72. *Nuzhat al-majālis wa muntakhab al-nafā’is* (1:365)

“And it is reported that he said ﷺ, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.’”

73. *Ādāb al-ṣuḥba* [Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī] (1:174)

“Companionship with Allah Most High is by following His commands, abstaining from His prohibitions, engaging in perpetual remembrance of Him, studying His Book, paying close attention to His secrets without adding to them anything that doesn’t please Him, showing contentment with Allah’s preordainment, observing patience with His trials, and showing mercy and pity to His creation, and other types of noble character traits. Companionship with the Messenger of Allah—may Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace—is by following his Sunna, turning away from blameworthy innovation, and exalting his Companions, the members of his household, his wives, and his children, and

avoiding opposition to him in all matters, small and large. Companionship with the Companions and the members of the Prophet's household ﷺ is by invoking Allah's mercy upon them, giving preference to those to whom they gave preference, speaking well about them, and accepting their views in legal rulings and Sunna practices. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.' And he also said, 'Indeed, I am leaving with you two weighty things: the Book of Allah and the members of my household, my progeny.'

74. *Al-Talkhīṣ al-ḥabīr fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Rāfiʿ al-kabīr* (5:499)

“The hadith: ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided’ . . .”

75. *Al-Mīzān al-Kubrā* (1:28)



“He ﷺ said, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided’ . . .”

Notes

1. Better known as *al-Shifā bi taʿrīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* ﷺ, by Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ.
2. *Ibid.*, 2:53.
3. Narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Madkhal* (p. 112) from the route of ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Zayd al-ʿAmmī, from his father, from Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, from ʿUmar ﷺ. This was also narrated by ʿAbd b. Ḥumayd (1:250 § 783), Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (2:377), Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr in *Bayān al-ʿilm* (§ 1081), and al-Ājurrī in *al-Sharīʿa* (§ 1149) from the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar. It was also reported by al-Khaṭīb in *al-Kifāya* (p. 101) and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Madkhal* (p. 113) from the route of Jūbīd, from al-Ḍaḥḥāk, from Ibn ʿAbbās. And it was also narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Madkhal* (p. 114) in a perplexed [*muʿadḍal*] form (in which two or more narrators are omitted from the chain) from Jawāb b. ʿUbaydullāh. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr narrated it in *Bayān al-ʿilm* from the route of Ḥārith b. Ghaṣan from al-Aʿmash from Ibn Sufyān, from Jābir b. ʿAbdullāh.
4. The act of placing a sound chain of transmission on a weak text or vice versa. —*Translator*
5. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *al-Muqaddima*, p. 60.
6. Narrated by Muslim (§ 2531) from the hadith of Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī ﷺ.
7. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar has an explicit statement that repudiates the claim that this is forged. In *al-Amālī al-muṭlaqa* (1:59, edited by Ḥamdī al-Salafī) he stated, after mentioning this hadith with his chain up to ʿAbd b. Ḥumayd:

This hadith is solitary [*gharīb*] and is singularly reported by Ḥamza al-Jazarī, and it is also said that he is Ḥamza b. Abī Ḥamza al-Nuṣaybī. It was narrated by Ibn ʿAdī in al-Kāmil from ʿAbdullah b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, from ʿAmr b. Muḥammad al-Nāqid, from ʿAmr b. ʿUthmān al-Kilābī, from Abū Shihāb—so its [chain] is high according to us. And Ibn ʿAdī narrated many hadith from this Ḥamza and stated that they are not followed up on because they are disclaimed. He also quoted Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn who said regarding Ḥamza, “He does not equal loose change.” And al-Bukhārī said that he narrates disclaimed hadith.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr mentioned in his book *Bayān al-ʿilm* that Abū Bakr al-Bazzār was asked about this hadith, to which he replied, “It is well-known among the people although it does not have an authentic chain.” Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr commented, “It was narrated by ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Zayd al-ʿAmmī from his father who narrated it from Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab from ʿUmar—and he might have said from Ibn ʿUmar—and the drawback in this chain is from ʿAbd al-Raḥīm.” Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr then completed his words by mentioning the narration of Shihāb that I have presented in full. And ʿAbd al-Raḥīm and Ḥamza are equally weak.

We have happened upon a report from the hadith of Jābir and its chain is better than the two aforementioned chains. Abū Hurayra b. al-Dhahabī informed us via license [*ijāza*] › al-Qāsim b. Abī Ghālib › Maḥmūd b. Ibrāhīm › Abū al-Rashīd Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Aṣfahānī › ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq › my father › ʿUmar b. al-Ḥasan › ʿAbdullāh b. Rawḥ › Salām b. Sulaymān › al-Ḥārith b. Ghaṣan › al-Aʿmash › Abū Sufyān › Jābir , from the Prophet  who said, “The likeness of my Companions to my nation is that of the stars; whomever of them you follow you will be guided.”

This was narrated by al-Dāraquṭnī in his book *al-Faḍā'il* from Aḥmad b. Kāmil from ʿAbdullāh b. Rawḥ. So here we have an alternative wording with a high chain.

This was narrated by Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr from his route and he commented on it, saying, “It is not proof-worthy because al-Ḥārith b. Ghaṣan is unknown.” I say: Ibn Ḥibbān included him among the reliable narrators and said that Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī al-Juʿfī narrated from him. Here there are two who have narrated from him and he was declared reliable so it can not be said that he is unknown. Of course, Abū Ḥātim said concerning the one who narrated from him that he is not strong [*laysa bi al-qawī*], and Ibn ʿAdī and al-ʿUqaylī said that he was disclaimed in hadith, and al-Nasāʾī mentioned in *al-Kunā* from some of his Sheikhs who declared him reliable.

As for the hadith of ʿUmar that was alluded to by al-Bazzār, it was narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Madkhal* from the route of Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād from ʿAbd al-Raḥīm. It was also reported from the narration of Juwaybir b. Saʿīd, who is one of the disclaimed reporters; sometimes he reports [his narrations] via al-Ḍaḥḥāk from Ibn ʿAbbās, from the Prophet ﷺ, and at other times he reports from Jawāb b. ʿUbaydullāh, from the Prophet ﷺ in a perplexed [*muʿaḍḍal*] form. Al-Bayhaqī said, “This text [*matn*] is well-known [*mashhūr*] and no chain is established for it, and some of it is corroborated by the hadith of Abū Mūsā—meaning the one I dictated in the previous gathering—for it alludes to the semblance between the Companions and the stars.

I have discovered another corroborating report from the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās: I rehearsed before Umm Yūsuf al-Maḥdasīyya from Abū Naṣr b. al-Shīrāzī › ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. ʿAbd al-Rashīd › al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad › Aḥmad b. ʿAbdullāh › al-Ṭabarānī › ʿAlī b. Saʿīd al-Rāzī › al-Ḥusayn b. ʿĪsā al-

Rāzī › al-Ṣabāḥ b. Muḥārib › Muḥammad b. Sūqa › ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalḥa › Ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنه, who said, “The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The stars are a source of security for the inhabitants of the heavens and my Companions are a source of security for my nation.””

Al-Ṭabarānī said, “al-Ṣabāḥ is the only one to narrate from Muḥammad b. Sūqa, and al-Ḥusayn b. ʿĪsā singularly reports this.” I say: Its narrators are all declared reliable but they say that ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalḥa did not hear from Ibn ʿAbbās, and that rather, he learned Quranic exegesis from Mujāhid and Saʿīd b. Jubayr learned from him. So now that you know the medium which is known to be reliable this can be relied upon. Most of the hanging [*muʿallaq* reports where the entire chain is omitted] narrations that al-Bukhārī reported from Ibn ʿAbbās in Quranic exegesis are from the copy of Muʿāwiya b. Ṣāliḥ on the authority of this same ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalḥa, as I explained in *Taghlīq al-taʿlīq*—and Allah knows best.

8. Al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-iʿtiqād*, p. 319.
9. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7:183 § 6629.
10. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, 3:125.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
12. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Iḥkām*, 6:243.
13. Al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, 2:350 § 3737.
14. Al-Tirmidhī, who declared it good (§ 1327), Abū Dāwūd (§ 3592), and al-Dārimī (§ 168). It was also reported by al-Ṭayālīsī (§ 559), Aḥmad (5:382), Ibn Mājah (§ 97) Ibn Ḥibbān (§ 6902), and al-Ḥākim (§ 4451) from the hadith of Ḥudhayfa رضي الله عنه.
15. Narrated by Aḥmad (4:126), Abū Dāwūd (§ 4607), al-Tirmidhī (§ 2676), Ibn Mājah (§ 42), al-Dārimī (§ 95), and Ibn Ḥibbān (§ 5) from the hadith of al-ʿIrbād رضي الله عنه. Al-Tirmidhī said, “It is an authentic hadith.”

16. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Iḥkām*, 6:244.
17. Narrated by al-Bukhārī, § 5268.
18. Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:18.
19. A collection of hadith compiled by Majd Ibn Taymiyya. —
Translator
20. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār*, 4:255.
21. *Al-Raj‘a*: The Shiite belief that the Imams and their enemies will return to this world after their deaths, so the former can exact revenge on the injustices of the latter. —*Translator*
22. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā’iṣ al-kubrā*, 1:91.
23. Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥākīm, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, 2:657.
24. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *al-Muqaddima*, p. 9.
25. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, 1:85. In this passage he also mentions that “if it said regarding a particular hadith that it is unauthentic, it means that its chain is authentic. . .”
26. *Qarābādīn al-Qādirī* is a pharmacopeia arranged in the order of diseases, written by Muḥammad Akbar b. Mīr Ḥājī Muḥammad Muqīm al-Arzānī.—*Translator*

